



ZECHARIAH

A Glorious Future!

The Glory of Returning!

Zechariah 1:1-6

Message #1 of 15 – S1006

Sermon given on July 24, 2022



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

The Glory of Returning!

Zechariah 1:1-6

Opening Comments

- **Before we get started – stand up and greet someone around you**
- Turn to **Zechariah 1** – It is the second to last book of the OT
- Today, we begin a series through the book of **Zechariah**
- Zechariah was one of the Minor Prophets – not for content but for length of his writing – though Zechariah is the longest of the Minor Prophets
- Zechariah was a contemporary of Haggai
- The Jews had returned from their seventy-year exile to Babylon
- They had started to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem - interrupted
- After 16 years Haggai, encouraged them to resume the great work
- Shortly after that Zechariah begins his ministry as a prophet
- Even though the Jews were back in the Promised Land things were very hard for them
- Jerusalem had been destroyed and there were people living in the land who resisted their efforts to rebuild
- Not only that but they weren't flourishing
- Things just weren't working out very well for them
- They were straining under the weight of their present reality
- The theme of Zechariah is the future – a glorious future for the Jews
- It can be hard to hope for a good future when your current reality is bad or hard
- Even for those who are doing well, it is encouraging to know that the future is going to be even better
- Zechariah is a book of prophecy – God declared the future through Zechariah
- It is also filled with numerous references to the Messiah – the Christ
- Let's pray and then look at a few of these verses - **Pray**

Teaching

- **The Glory of Returning!**

- **Zechariah 1:1**
- The name Zechariah means ‘Yahweh (God) remembers’.
- It is believed that he was from the tribe of Levi
- This would have made him a priest and prophet, like Jeremiah and Ezekiel
- Dated October 520 B.C. – in the city of Jerusalem
- **Zechariah 1:2**
- ‘your fathers’ = ancestors. This is not just referring to Zechariah’s ancestors but to all the people of Israel.
- God promised great blessings, prosperity, and protection to the people of Israel if they would love, worship, and obey Him and Him alone.
- God also warned them of great consequences if they chose not to do that. Deuteronomy 28 is a great summary of that.
- Zechariah’s ancestors had chosen not to love, worship, and obey God, and so, God kept His promises of consequences (curses).
- One of the promised consequences was exile from the Promised Land.
- God is always faithful to His Word.
- God gets angry over sin, not because of what it does to Him, but because of what it does to those He created to experience His love and holiness
- And because sin always spreads and leads to more sin, God must eventually intervene with judgment and wrath
- Each of the next four verses includes a summons from God
- I was angry with your ancestors - do the following four things
- First – **Repent to experience all of God’s blessings**
- **Zechariah 1:3**
- ‘Return to Me.’ – This was a regular call from God to the people of Israel **Isaiah 44:22**
I have blotted out, like a thick cloud, your transgressions, and like a cloud, your sins. Return to Me, for I have redeemed you.
- It continues in the New Testament for the church **James 4:8**
Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.
- The Bible only offers one solution to the problem of sin – repentance.

- To repent is to turn away from the way you are going and turn back to God. Jesus says He is the way to God **John 14:6**
John 14:6 - Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.
- If you want to experience more of God's blessings – repent
- Second – **Respond to the lessons of history**
- **Zechariah 1:4**
- Zechariah was speaking to people who had lived through or were born in the exile to Babylon.
- God reminds them that He had warned them **2 Chronicles 36:15-16**
And the LORD God of their fathers sent warnings to them by His messengers, rising up early and sending them, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place. 16 But they mocked the messengers of God, despised His words, and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, till there was no remedy.
- There is a saying, 'Those who do not learn from the past are doomed to repeat it.'
- God faithfully recorded the failures of His people and the consequences they experienced so that future generations would learn from their mistakes.
- If someone does the same thing God judged someone else for, they should expect the same consequences
- Third – **Realize how brief time and opportunities are**
- **Zechariah 1:5**
- Life is not permanent. Opportunities are not always going to be there.
- The time to repent and do the good works of God is today **Job 7:6a; 7a**
My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle...7 Oh, remember that my life is a breath...
- The older I get; the faster time seems to be moving
- As an older man – you younger people – don't wait
- Take advantage of the opportunities God places in front of you now
- Fourth – **Remember the unchangeableness of God's Word**
- **Zechariah 1:6**
- God's people and prophets are temporary, but God's Word is permanent, immutable, unchanging.

- ‘My words and My statutes’ – When God says something, it is going to happen just as He said it would **Isaiah 55:11**

So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.

- This is one of the reasons we read and study God’s Word.
- The better we know what God said, the better we understand what is happening in our lives and in the world.
- God is telling them to acknowledge that God did what He said He was going to do.
- The prophet Jeremiah wrote the book of Lamentations from the exile
Lamentations 2:17

The LORD has done what He purposed; He has fulfilled His word which He commanded in days of old. He has thrown down and has not pitied, and He has caused an enemy to rejoice over you; He has exalted the horn of your adversaries.

- If God’s Word says it – believe it – trust it – obey it
- And if you choose not to do that, prepare to receive the consequences
- Next week we are going to look at two of eight visions God gives Zechariah to encourage the Jews to be faithful to God and to live in hope of a glorious future
- The Jews are not the only ones God has promised a glorious future to
Romans 8:18

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

- As a believer in Jesus Christ, you have been promised a glorious future
- Regardless of what your today is, good or bad, God has prepared a glorious future for you
- And He would say the same things to us that He said through Zechariah
- First – **Repent to experience all of God’s blessings**
- Turn to **1 John 1**
- The apostle John writes this letter to believers
- And talks about a topic some churches avoid
- **1 John 1:8-10**
- I take a shower every day – why? Because I need to!

- If I wanted to, I could skip a day, use a little extra deodorant and maybe a little cologne
- The longer I go without taking a shower the more obvious it would be that I need one
- Repentance is a shower for the soul – it cleanses us of the filth we pick up living in a broken, wrong-way world
- The longer you go without repenting, the more those around you can tell that you need to
- Repentance is the key that unlocks God’s blessings – why would you not do it, and do it frequently?
- Second – **Respond to the lessons of history**
- There is a saying, ‘Those who do not learn from the past are doomed to repeat it.’
- God faithfully recorded the failures of His people and the consequences they experienced so that future generations would learn from their mistakes.
- Personally, I would rather learn from the mistakes of others than make those mistakes myself and suffer the consequences they suffered.
- Third – **Realize how brief time and opportunities are**
- No one knows how much time they have on this earth
- We need to make the best of the time we are given **Ephesians 5:15-16**
See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, ¹⁶redeeming the time, because the days are evil.
- Today is the day you have – don’t waste it!
- Fourth – **Remember the unchangeableness of God’s Word**
- We live in a culture that is changing the definitions of words to move forward evil doctrines and lifestyles
- To experience God’s blessings, we need to stand on the unchangeable Word of God
- As we continue this study through Zechariah, we will examine the glorious life God has in store for us all
- And while we wait for that glorious life, God would call us to live within His blessings
- And it all begins with a regular spiritual cleansing – repentance - **Pray**